

Faith Presbyterian Church

Annual Report

2024



Rails to Trails Press Conference

Faith Presbyterian Church
5400 Loch Raven Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21239
www.faithpcbalt.org



Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 2, 2025

Clerk of Session: William Curtis

Docket

Opening Prayer

Rev. Cat Dodson Goodrich

Report of the Clerk of Session

William Curtis

Report of the Finance Committee

Christopher Pope

- Budget for 2025
- Vote to Approve the Terms of Call

Highlights of Annual Report and Hopes for 2025

Rev. Goodrich

Adjourn with Prayer

Rev. Goodrich

Luncheon in Hyde Hall

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Pastor's Report

Rev. Cat Dodson Goodrich



Dear friends of Faith,

A few snapshots and highlights from the past year at Faith to share:

- Breathing deeply in Jackson Lounge with Leanora Eubanks as our guide, stretching through yoga poses during our Spirituality Retreat
- Our courtyard crowded with excited children, gathering eggs during our Easter Egg Hunt. We had a tremendous turnout from both the neighborhood and our Faith community, to dye and hunt eggs, play games, dance, and greet the bunny!
- Faith kids dancing down the aisle on Easter morning, embodying our shared joy as we began our service of worship.
- Throwing pizzas, making tortillas, baking cookies, and more with teens from Nexus-Woodbourne through our first cooking program – and rejoicing that one received his ServSafe Certification – to help him get a restaurant job in the future.
- Watching the creation of an intricate and beautiful sand mandala on the floor of Hyde Hall, as we hosted a group of Tibetan Buddhist monks from the Drepung

Gomang Monastery in India for a week of their sacred arts tour.

- Standing with our neighbors, partners, BUILD, and city officials to celebrate the revitalization of Chinquapin Park, including Kate Foster and Rails to Trails' work to win \$270,000 in funding to plan a new trail along Chinquapin Run.
- Sharing lunch with the staff of the Immigrant Outreach Service Center, Baltimore Presbytery, and Agape Amour Childcare as we welcomed the IOSC as a new tenant on our third floor.
- With Bill Curtis, telling the story of our reforestation project at the Mid-Atlantic Matthew 25 Summit, learning from other participants about their Matthew 25 inspired anti-racism, compassion, and environmental justice work.



What a year! Did you, like me, leave the sanctuary on Sundays with a full heart, uplifted by the connections of our community and the beauty of song, feeling more equipped for the week ahead? Did you also find ways to serve, to feed others and to be fed in and through our congregation? Did you learn, deepen your sense of the sacred in each day, and hear and answer an invitation to show up outside of the church for our neighbors in a new way? I am so grateful for the ways we are seeking God, standing

together, and serving our neighbors as Faith Church.

There's so much in store for 2025: a new natural playground on our south lawn; further discernment around a long-term vision for our property; continued engagement with our neighbors around Chinquapin Run Park; and intentional work for reparative justice, to name just a few. For many, our country feels as if it is hanging by a thread; our shared commitment to be beloved community, and to invite others to join us, is more important now than ever. It is a gift to be in ministry together!

Thanks be to God for you, and for Faith Church.

Rev. Cat Goodrich

Clerk's Report
William Blair Curtis, Clerk of the Session

Session		
Bill Curtis, Clerk		
2025	2026	2027
Paula Burger*	John Colmers	Andy Fuller
Gail Poorbaugh	Scott McGill	James Herber**
Judy Sperling	Robin Nemser	Kristin Herber
Mozella Williams	Vacant	Chris Pope
*second term		
**one year term		

The Session: In accordance with the revised bylaws of Faith Presbyterian Church, is comprised of twelve (12) ruling elders. Ruling elders are divided into three equal classes, with one class being elected each year by the congregation in June.

Rev. Cat Goodrich, Moderator of Session
Rev. Kate Foster, Parish Associate

Rev. Christa Fuller Burns, Pastor Emerita

Officers of the Corporation, 2024

Ron Sperling, President
Marilyn Valentine, Secretary
John Colmers, Treasurer
Neil Nemser, Trust Officer

The Session has a regular monthly meeting and other meetings to accept new members or conduct other business as needed.

The Annual Congregational Meeting was held on January 28, 2024. There were additional congregational meetings to elect new church officers.

Communion was observed 15 times, monthly and on Maundy Thursday, Easter, and Christmas Eve service.

Current Membership: 117 members, total with friends and children 221.

New Members in 2024: Nell Fultz, Garrett & Bella Loomer, David Rawle

The Session recognizes and pays tribute to the memory of our member who died in 2024:



Patricia Thomson
Died 03/20/2024 Joined Faith 10/02/1963

Memorial Funds Received:
\$13,687

If you have any questions about the church and how it functions, please reach out to me, curtiswbc@gmail.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Curtis

Short and Long-term Property Use Task Forces

Short-Term: **Paula Burger, Carl Herber, Lauren Hill, Neil Nemser**

The Short-Term task force was formed by the session in late 2023 to evaluate the unused space in our building with the intention of securing a new tenant. This would be both to ensure good stewardship of our property, and to help close the income gap left by the loss of two tenants since 2020 and the Presbytery's space reduction.

The Short-term team determined a fair, below-market price for our unused offices and rooms on the third floor, developed an advertisement, and circulated it widely with our community partners. As a result, the Immigration Outreach Service Center (IOSC) learned of our available space, and moved into our third floor in August of 2024. Formed out of the St. Matthew's church, the IOSC supports immigrants by offering legal consults, English language classes, tutoring, and more.

The old fellowship hall and our choir room are both not currently in use; the short-term task force anticipates working to identify potential tenants for that space in the first half of 2025.

Long-Term: **Bill Curtis, John Colmers, Kate Foster, Scott McGill**

The Long-Term Task Force was tasked to research and recommend the highest and best use for our property for the long-term. Reflecting on the age and size of our congregation, and national downward trends of membership in Protestant churches, as well as rising costs across the board, we realize that we need to make some changes to ensure our congregation's viability for the long term. This

year, they assessed the needs of our neighborhood, explored possible redevelopment of part or all of our property; and sought to identify potential development partners. They anticipate working with Project Regeneration of the Presbyterian Foundation to help further our understanding of where the Spirit is leading us. The goal of the task force is to identify and recommend to session a way lower the overall operating cost of our property, to ensure long-term sustainability for our congregation's mission and ministry in this place.

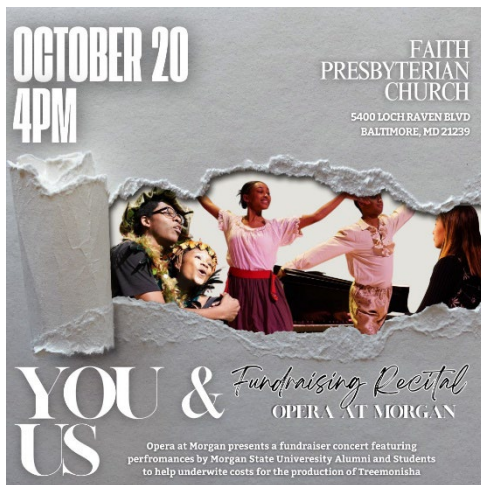
Music Ministry

Samuel Springer, Minister of Music & Organist

Thanks to the support from the pastor, staff, choir, and congregants, the music program continued to thrive.



The Adult Choir provided excellent music and fellowship to the congregation through their participation in services as well as on other special liturgical occasions. The choir sang in a variety of different styles last year, from the classics to gospel. They will continue to vary the musical selections. A variety of musical guests participated in the service last year. We started the season with a cellist from *The Two Rivers Chamber Music* group. This was a start to a year-long program to use varied artists in the service at Faith.



Faith has also been a wonderful partner in the community. Students from Morgan State University have been using the church facilities for practice, rehearsals and recitals. One notable recital was the Morgan Opera Workshop in October. Seven student presented opera scenes for an attentive audience. This was a fundraiser for the Scott Joplin Opera “Treemonisha” which was presented at Morgan State in November. There was also a young emerging artist, Terriq Deontri (Tenor), who held his recital at the church. Another partnership is with **The Urban Choral Arts Society**. They rehearse at the church on Saturdays.



The Christmas Eve service was enhanced with a string quartet, The Two Rivers Chamber Music group. We are very grateful for the financial support from members of Faith to enable us to bring musicians of this caliber into our worship

experience. We are also grateful to the members of the congregation who play great music. Mike Shirey has continued to enhance our worship with wonderful compositions of his own and others. At two occasions, Lenny Rogers lent his steel pan skills to enhance our services and outside events. He has been a great musical friend of Faith. Dr. Josanne Francis also taught six steel pan training classes for members of the community through our partnership with her organization, *Steel on Wheels*. In the coming year, there will be more concerts and partnerships to enhance the worship experience. Stay tuned!

Come try out the choir with no strings attached. We will be happy to have you. There has been a little change to the rehearsal schedule: we rehearse on Sunday afternoons after the service until 1:00 p.m., with a warmup at 10:15 a.m. before the service. This adds a little flexibility to those who find midweek rehearsals a challenge.

Thank you for a wonderful year to minister to you. It has been an enriching and humbling experience. I hope I will continue to enhance your worship life. If you have any questions or comments, my door is always open.

Dr. Samuel Springer

Deacons

Laurie Newton, *Deacon Moderator*

Bill Curtis, *Treasurer*

Deacons

2025	2026	2027
Lauren Hill*	Bill Curtis*	Phyllis Compton*
Dawn Shirey	Laurie Newton	Nancy Gulsoy
Krista Wallace	Natalie Wallace	
*second term		

The Deacons care for the members and friends of Faith Church, our community, and support

our mission commitments both locally and abroad.

Each month we try to connect with members who are no longer able to attend church. Greeting cards are sent to those on our care list or to anyone who has been ill, suffered hardship, or lost a loved one. While the Deacons have always prepared or arranged meals for members and friends in need, we have decided to celebrate certain holidays with soup or casserole and sweet treat. In October, the Deacons and a few members made casseroles and decorated cupcakes, which were delivered to our care list folks.



We continue to provide regular financial support to GEDCO, the CARES pantry, Harford House and Habitat for Humanity. For the residents of Harford House, an apartment building for formerly homeless men, we provide a home-cooked or purchased meal each month. Last November, we contributed \$500 towards a catered Thanksgiving meal for Harford House and Micah House. With the generosity of our members, we were able to purchase Christmas gifts for 17 residents of Harford House, as part of their “Holiday Cheer Program.” The staff at GEDCO was very appreciative. The Deacons also subsidized the purchase of tickets to GEDCO’s Thanksgiving Tribute Dinner, which is their largest fundraiser of the year.

Another annual Thanksgiving project was putting together baskets that were delivered to members and friends of the church. The Deacons delivered five Thanksgiving baskets with all the traditional dinner fixings and gave two gift cards. This project is supported by the Bread Fund.

Another holiday project is Cookies for CARES. With the help of the congregation, the Deacons delivered 41 boxes of cookies to CARES.



At the Advent Festival, the Hands of Faith table raised around \$2,114 for the Hands of Faith Fund. Congratulations and thanks to all who donated items.



The Deacons delivered Welcome Bags for new Harford House residents, last spring. The bags contained items needed to set-up a new apartment, including towels, sheets, and toiletries. Receiving the bags made the residents feel “that someone cared.”

We also supported our partners in Cuba in 2024. Audrey Trapp brought financial support, food, craft supplies, over the counter medicines, and solar lanterns with her for our churches in Meneses and Iguara when she visited El Centro Presbytery for a meeting in early December.



The Deacons specified that our portion of the Peace and Global Witness offering be donated to Baltimore Safe Streets to support their efforts to disrupt cycles of violence and retribution in the city.

Our programs are funded by three main sources of income: the Bread Fund, which provides for food needs; the Hands of Faith Fund, which provides for charitable needs; and the DEAR Fund, which provides emergency assistance to our Faith community members and friends. We know that without your amazing generosity our work would not be possible. Thank you for your continued support!

Laurie Newton, Moderator
The Board of Deacons

Christian Education

Children and Youth **Robin Nemser**, *chair*

What a joy our Faith children and youth are. We appreciate and thank God for their curiosity, kind hearts and talents. During the 2024 church year, we were blessed with the participation of 19 children on our rolls: Nursery: 4, K-5th grade: 5, and 6th-12th grade: 10.

Church School is held each Sunday following the Moment with Faith Kids. We use the Spark House Curriculum which is designed for all ages. This enables us to combine the K-5th graders into one group. The children seem to enjoy being together.

We are grateful for our creative and flexible members who have taught during the church year, including **Susan Minor, Judy Sperling, Mozella Williams, Hannah Pope, Chandra Jackson, and Robin Nemser.**



Our youth group combined again this year with two other churches (Roland Park, Govans). ROPAGOFA attended a production of “Jesus Christ, Superstar,” created Care Bags for the unhoused, enjoyed a cookout, etc. Unfortunately, due to several reasons, the other

churches were not able to participate in the group during the last part of the year. This committee would like to thank Pastor Goodrich, Hannah Pope, and Krista Wallace for keeping ROPAGOFA alive in 2024.



The Playground remains a place for young children to gather and quietly cut, fold, color and read during the first part of worship before they go to Sunday School.

This committee, along with Faith Forward, sponsored a neighborhood wide Easter Egg Hunt Celebration on March 30. Although we don't know exactly how many attended, over 700 Easter Eggs were found in the hunt! The children enjoyed several crafts, parachute games, and photo sessions with the Easter Bunny and Beaver.



The Halloween Party, an intergenerational event for Faith, was held on October 27 following worship. Young and old joined in the fun and games, clad in costumes, or not!

This year's Christmas Pageant, "Cosmic Baby", was, once again, written and directed by Susan Johnston. We had a least 15 children participate in sharing the story of Christ's birth with our congregation.



We look forward to another year of providing opportunities to develop the spirituality of our children and youth.

Respectfully Submitted,
Robin Nemser

The Forum

The **Forum** presentations for 2024 covered a variety of topics as we sought to engage participants in matters of faith as well as consideration of issues of concern that relate to Faith Church's commitment to social, economic, and environmental justice for our city and the world. We met in person while others joined us on Zoom. Attendance ranged generally from 12 to 20, with active participation by those present. Here's a recap of a very enriching year:



Josh Boak, White House AP reporter

January: A program on **New Year's Resolutions:** why we make them and break them, led by Deb and John Colmers. A series on **Matthew 25** and its implications for Faith Church, organized by John Colmers to consider what we are called to do in committing to become a Matthew 25 Congregation.

February: Dr. Jerrett Hansen, a retired pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, led a series on **"Living the Questions."** Conversations about the essential questions in the Christian faith and what's next for Christianity explored topics including Taking the Bible Seriously, Thinking Theologically, The Myth of Redemptive Violence, and Stories of Creation.

March: We reflected on the **Power of Ritual** in a Lenten series led by Rev. Cat Goodrich. We explored how we can nourish our souls by transforming everyday practices into sacred rituals that can heal our loss of connection to ourselves, to others, and to our spiritual identities.

April: **'Celebrating Baltimore's Cultural Resources'** with programs by Bill Curtis on Ft. McHenry; John Geist and Ron Sperling on the B & O Railroad Museum; Ellen Bernard on the Walters Art Museum; and pianist Lura Johnson on the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

May: **BUILD** organizers Frank McMillan and Sameka Turner presented an update on BUILD's major initiative to deal with the vacant housing crisis in Baltimore and other city issues that the organization, of which we are a part, is addressing. Elly Colmers Cowan, Principal for Government Relations and Director of Public Relations for Compass Advocacy, spoke to us about the recent legislative session and bills of

interest to Faith folks, including childcare, gun violence, and solar energy.

September: “Vote Your Values”, a series that focused on the issues at stake in the 2024 election, included Andy Fuller discussing Project 2025; Christine Krieger, Program Director for the Institute of Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies addressing Christian Nationalism; and Josh Boak, a reporter for the Associated Press sharing his observations on The Media and the Presidential Race.

October: “Up Close & Personal: Stories of Immigration” was organized by Audrey Trapp as a series that included a presentation by Bhim BK, the Executive Director of the Immigration and Outreach Service Center (IOSC); the stories of the Delgado and Tamayo families as they described their journeys to America; Mariam Alimi, a photojournalist who fled Afghanistan, and a session on food security in Cuba and what it means for our partner churches in Cuba.

November: John Colmers facilitated a series on **Aging Well**, including presentations on practical and spiritual matters that can be addressed to prepare ourselves for a happy and safe life. Topics included Promoting Healthy Aging, Spiritual Approach to Aging, End of Life Issues, and Preparing for the Future.

December: Pastor Cat Goodrich led a series using the devotional booklet **Advent Unbound**. Each week, the devotional walked through three episodes of Padraig O’Tuama’s Poetry Unbound podcast. We had the chance to reflect on the poems and how they spoke to such topics as Peace and Hope and to ourselves and our concerns.

Plan to join the Forum in 2025 on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the Woodmont Room as we gather

to educate ourselves about things that matter and as we take advantage of time together to reflect on our faith and its implications. We welcome and value your ideas for programs. Please share them with John Colmers, Paula Burger, or Pastor Cat Goodrich.

Worship and Arts

Judy Sperling, *chair*

Committee Members: **Cat Goodrich**, *pastor*, **Samuel Springer**, *Minister of Music*, **Phyllis Compton**, **Andy Fuller**, **Robert Gardner**, **Pat Nesbitt**, **Dawn Shirey**, **Mike Shirey**, **Marilyn Valentine**, **Charleen Witherspoon**



Faith Church is not an ordinary church. We are open and affirming all orientations and identities, diverse in race, gender, age and income. We strive to be connected to our neighbors. We have a commitment to practice collaborative worship. Rev. Cat Goodrich, pastor, Samuel Springer, Minister of Music, and the Worship & Arts Committee work as a team. Rev. Cat and Samuel begin to plan worship by looking months ahead of the season to identify themes, liturgy, art, etc. When the time is right, the Worship & Arts committee joins the table. Together we talk about ideas and identify needs. At the end of the meeting the Worship & Arts

committee has a list of things that will be their responsibilities.

In addition, the committee has routine tasks such as preparing Communion, hanging worship banners, maintaining the worship closet and keeping an inventory of needed items. The benefit of collaboration planning is that it allows us to incorporate liturgy, music, art and include children and adult worshipers.



The addition of worship via zoom has allowed us to reach out to everyone. Outdoor worship encourages friendships and introduces us to our community. The following is a sample of this past year's worship. Preparation for the season of **Lent** was on Fat Tuesday with a Pancake Dinner in Hyde Hall. Rev. Cat gave a brief Lenten devotion and Imposition of ashes. **Ash Wednesday** was on the same day as Valentine's Day. The chapel was open for personal prayer, candle lighting and reflection, with the imposition of ashes and a blessing available between noon and one o'clock. On **Palm Sunday**, we paraded around the neighborhood

before worship. On **Maundy Thursday**, worshipers were asked to gather with family and friends for dinner at home. On **Good Friday**, worshipers gathered in the sanctuary at 6pm for a solemn service of remembrance. **Easter** began with a congregational potluck brunch in Jackson Lounge, followed by a joyful service in witness to the resurrection. **Earth Day** was celebrated on the Saturday before when volunteers planted, pruned, seeded and generally cleaned our church grounds. When people slowly returned from summer fun it was time for our annual **Homecoming Sunday**, when we worshiped in the sunshine and stayed to enjoy a potluck lunch. On **All Saints Sunday**, we had a service of healing and wholeness. Early planning and many helpers created a wonderful celebration of **Advent** and **Christmas**, beginning with stars and an Advent Wreath, and ending with candlelight and a Christmas Blessing. It's time to begin planning for 2025. Come and join us!

Respectfully submitted,
Judith Sperling

Faith Forward Committee
Scott McGill, *chair*

Committee Members: **Nell Fultz, Kristen Herber, Chandra Jackson, Scott McGill, Robin Nemser, Gail Poorbaugh, Rev. Cat Goodrich**

The Faith Forward Committee's charge is to engage new and prospective members in the activities of the church and its mission, and to grow our Faith community over time. Much of the work of the committee involves planning community-based programming for our Faith community and inviting those new to us, both within our geographic neighborhood, and expanding from there to the greater Baltimore

region. In 2024, the committee and the church membership held numerous community events at our location as well as the Greater Baltimore area.

2024 events and gatherings included:

- **“An Evening with Dan Rodricks”** in January. Dan, a Baltimore icon, regaled us with engaging stories he experienced over his 43-year career as a Baltimore Sun columnist. In addition, in December many of us attended his play, “Baltimore, You Have No Idea”, performed at the Baltimore Museum of Art.



- **Spirituality Retreat in February.** The committee sponsored a unique and uplifting event that included a multitude of speakers and presenters. Attendees experienced music as a meditation modality, discovered and learned about chakra balancing, theta meditation techniques, yoga movements, and forest baths in our new planted forest.
- **Community egg hunt in April.** The committee, along with the Easter Bunny and Easter Beaver, hosted an incredibly well-attended event that offered egg dyeing, egg hunting and crafts to church members and families in the neighborhood. Some attendees had never dyed eggs before!

- **Orioles game night in June.** A fun night was had by all at Camden Yards.



- **Nerd Night in June.** Church members Dary Goodrich, Nikolas Hill and Scott McGill gave informative talks about chocolate, cocktails, and beaver, while attendees enjoyed a beautiful evening on the Faith lawn and music by **6 Feet Apart**.
- **Movie night in September.** The committee invited church and community members, young and old to enjoy “Encanto” and free popcorn!
- **Carols and Cheer in December.** The committee wrapped up the year with a lively evening at Peabody Heights Brewing that welcomed back several community member attendees who joined us again after having so much fun last year.



Moving into **2025**, we are bringing back our greatest hits as well as some new and exciting initiatives, including:

- **Game night on Friday February 28** a casual night of community and fun, playing games. Attendees can bring a game to share. And of course, bring a friend, or better yet, a group of friends for fun and fellowship.
- **Spiritual Retreat on Saturday March 22** with additional programming and activities
- **Egg Hunt on April 19** The Easter Bunny and Beaver will attend again this year.
- **Church birthday on Sunday June 8** an event to commemorate the church's birthday but with a twist - attendees will split up into groups and each group will share a cake and engage in discussion about marking birthdays and build community, sharing to get to know one another.
- **Nerd Night in June** (date TBD) - A small cohort of amazing speakers share interesting and engaging topics
- **Movie night in August** (date TBD)
- **Orioles night** (date TBD)

NEW for 2025

- **Bike giveaway** - Spring 2025 - Partnering with Jam Squad, a local non profit that puts kids on bikes, we are planning a bike giveaway this spring for neighborhood youth. The bikes are free to these youth, and we will help fit kids on bikes, provide some safety guidance, and fit a helmet for each child. Stay tuned for details!
- **Wine Tasting and Informative Talk about the importance of beaver** - Spring 2025. We will meet at a beaver pond in Baltimore County, learn about beaver, their role as ecosystem engineer, in mitigating flooding, drought, improving water quality, and as agents for biodiversity and abundance. Following the walk, we will meet

at a local wintery to share our experience and fellowship.

Our committee's annual goal is to expand our Faith Community by 10%, or roughly 20 new connections. We are excited by the new neighbors and friends who have been attending worship more regularly. We encourage all members to engage with new faces in our community. Introduce yourself and ask them their name and where they're from as an easy start. Our committee believes that we grow our community through human connections and conversations.

If you have ideas for a 2025 Faith event, reach out to us and let's talk about it!

Social and Environmental Justice Council

Karen Meyers, *chair*

Committee Members: **Paula Burger, Bill Curtis, Nell Fultz, Bobby Hall, Charles Minor, Susan Minor, Pat Nesbitt, Laurie Newton, David Rawle, Lori Rawle, Dawn Shirey, Mike Shirey, Mozella Williams**

Early in 2024, the Social and Environmental Justice Council (SEJC), chose several areas on which to focus over the course of the year. We



committed to seeking more ways to connect to our surrounding communities.

As one part of this effort, we have continued to plan improvements to our grounds to make them a gathering place for the nearby neighborhood which lacks a park, school, community center, or other location where neighbors can meet and discuss common concerns. With the design help of a graduate student in landscape architecture at the University of Maryland and, with financial support from a Baltimore City grant, we began to plan the construction of a natural playground to be located on the South lawn of the church. We solicited input from the community and received a grant from the Baltimore Community Foundation to purchase the materials. We hoped to acquire the wood needed from Camp Small, the city facility which collects the wood from trees which are removed from city property. The fire at Camp Small in December has been somewhat of a setback but we expect that we can find another source of materials if Camp Small is unable to fulfill our order. We also plan to install rain barrels to collect water from the roof of the building which will be used to water the native plants that will surround the playground. We expect the playground will draw neighbors who will bring children and grandchildren to our grounds where they can also take advantage of the story walk and the Little Free Library.

We have continued to deepen our connection to Nexus Woodbourne Family Healing Center. In the Spring we helped the students plant a vegetable garden on the grounds of the Center and ran a cooking class in the church kitchen with five Nexus Woodbourne students. The students in the class were offered the opportunity to achieve a ServSafe certification by doing an online program with study guides that we supplied. One student completed the

program and received his certification. A Youth Environmental Stewardship (YES) grant from the city allowed us to pay five students from Nexus Woodbourne to work planting perennials in our urban forest, do landscaping work on our grounds, and remove invasive vines from trees in Chinquapin Park.



We have also become involved in the community efforts to improve Chinquapin Park, supported by our partners at BUILD. The Rails to Trails Conservancy (where our parish associate Kate Foster is an executive) received a sizable grant from the France-Merrick Foundation to pay a design firm to devise a plan for a trail along Chinquapin Run. We helped organize a press conference in September to celebrate the grant and bring attention to the initiative. Faith member Natalie Wallace now serves on a committee of community members the purpose of which is to ensure that community input is incorporated into the design plan.



We collaborated with Faith Forward in early September to host a movie night in our courtyard which was well attended by families from the neighborhood.

As part of our continuing concern with literacy, Paula Burger and others have collected books from the Maryland Book Bank which allowed us to do a book give-away at the end of the school year at Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School and, at the request of our member Hannah Pope, to supply books to the library of the Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center. Thanks to the work of Dawn Shirey, the story walk on our grounds has been maintained and updated throughout the year.

Committee members David and Lori Rawle discovered that a member of Govans Presbyterian is collecting aluminum cans to raise money for a children's home in Haiti and we decided to enlist our congregation in the effort. Our congregation has contributed so many cans that we have doubled the number of cans collected by Govans.



We have joined NECO, the Northeast Community Organization, an umbrella group of neighborhood associations in the northeast part of the city, in order to stay apprised of the concerns of residents in our area.

During 2025, we will continue to work with BUILD and the neighborhood associations around Chinquapin Park on improving the park. We plan to host another cooking class for Nexus Woodbourne students, again help them plant a vegetable garden, and look for other opportunities to engage with them. We hope to have the playground completed sometime this year. And we will work with the Immigration Outreach Service Center, now housed in our building, to support their work in any way we can. We also hope to work with Faith Forward to find ways to attract the many individuals in our community who are suffering from loneliness and in need of a supportive community like ours.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Meyers, *chair*

Plant and Property Committee
Neil Nemser, *co-chair*
Pat Nesbitt, *co-chair*

Committee Members: Dave Brown, Bill Curtis, Carl Herber, Jack Nesbitt, David Rawle, Ron Sperling

The Committee has been busy maintaining the building and grounds throughout the year.

Three Video screens were installed in the Sanctuary to replace the temporary projection screen set up to support Zoom worship at the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic. The screens support Zoom worship, create the opportunity for diverse and creative possibilities in worship and other activities, as well as permit the choir to have the same opportunities for viewing as the congregation.

The lighting in Chapel was upgraded to LED bulbs with dimmers to provide brighter illumination for the choir to rehearse, as well as

appropriate lighting for worship and other activities that occur there.

The chandelier on our portico has been out of commission for some time. It has been re-wired and a new timer and on/off switch installed.

To facilitate events occurring in the Jackson Courtyard, like our successful movie night, we have installed power outlets on the outside of the building on both sides of the steps.

New Directory Signs generated by the Faith Forward Committee were installed in the hall outside the Sanctuary, in the foyer outside the Chapel and in the entrance way to the south parking lot.



The wooden double doors between the Narthex and the Sanctuary were refinished and sealed with durable, washable, urethane.

A drainage problem with the ground niches in our Columbarium was identified. The original company which installed it, installed a new drainage system and the excavation work was regraded and seeded to restore the lawn.

Topsoil was spread on the east half of the Faith Forest, wildflowers were planted along with other perennials.

The refrigerators in the second-floor kitchen and the third-floor kitchen have been replaced due to age, efficiency, and equipment failure.



Finally, after much time and effort by our Church Administrator, the siding on our steeple and other locations around the building, have been repaired. Repairs to damage to the lawn and sidewalk caused by the siding repair crew will be repaired by them when the weather permits.

As always, a shout out to the volunteers who toil nearly every Thursday and Second Saturday to trim, pull weeds, mulch, move snow, and so many other tasks, have saved our budget literally thousands of dollars in skill and labor costs.

Looking ahead to 2025

We are going to take advantage of a BG&E program that will replace all of the lighting in our building complex with LED fixtures and bulbs, which haven't already been converted.

- Cooperation with the SEJC Committee to facilitate the installation of a Natural Playground on the south lawn.
- Repair and painting of the exterior railings.

- Repainting of the women's bathroom on the second floor.
- Repainting of the Sanctuary entrance door from the hallway.

Stewardship

Carl Herber, *chair*

Committee: **Paula Burger, Chandra Jackson, Neil Nemser, Natalie Wallace.**



This year our Stewardship campaign theme was **Connecting with Faith**. Members Laurie Newton, Delevana Brown, Garrett and Bella Loomer, and Nancy Gulsoy all offered moving testimonies during worship in November, sharing what Faith means to them, and how it moves them to support the work of the church. It is always impactful to hear personal stories of our members and how Faith Church has become an important part of their lives.

The campaign culminated in Hyde Hall with our traditional subs and sundaes luncheon with the popular sundae station hosted by Dary Goodrich, and Jersey Mike's subs as the headlining main course!

We are deeply grateful for the generosity and commitment of our congregation, which

allowed the campaign to generate pledges for \$246,164 to Faith during this year's campaign for 2025, which is down about \$25,000 from 2024 pledges. Although this number is down in total due to two lost pledges, we celebrate eight NEW pledges for 2025 with almost all the church membership participating! Our ACTUAL giving historically is higher than the pledged amount, but unfortunately in 2024, that was not the case, so hopefully we get back on track in 2025 to help us make back the decrease in 2025 pledges.

More members continue to shift their giving to electronic / online giving options, including PayPal, Electronic Funds Transfer, (which brings consistency for which we are grateful), and easy QR code and web-based options from your hand held device or computer, so feel free to 'Set it and Forget It!' If you did 'Forget It', don't worry, it is never too late to make a 'catch up' contribution or let the office know of your pledge or adjustments to your pledge for 2025!

A quick note on the Presbyterian Per Capita pledge for 2025: it is \$42 per member, which goes to support the work of the Presbytery and the larger PCUSA. This amount is tracked separately from your annual giving pledge, and is a one-time, annual contribution, so please make a note on your check or there is an option on the online giving site to categorize your contribution as 'Per Capita.'

We are filled with anticipation and excitement about what our church is called to do in the coming year – life giving ministry helping our community and members Connect with Faith! Thank you, Faith Church!

Submitted by Carl Herber

Committee on Human Resources

Paula Burger, *chair*

Committee Members: **Phyllis Compton, Kristin Herber, Ellsworth Jackson, Chris Pope, Rev. Cat Goodrich**

Considerable time and administrative attention were directed to a number of human resource issues in 2024. Faith Church confronted the ramifications of the discovery in late 2023 that Pastor compensation had been incorrectly reported to the Board of Pensions. This meant that the church's pension obligations (for both pension contribution and health care coverage) were underfunded for 2022 and 2023. The resolution of these matters is now complete, thanks to a substantial investment of forensic effort, undertaken by Rev. Goodrich, Finance Committee Chair Chris Pope, Parish Administrator Diane Borgatti, and your HR Committee Chair. In consultation with the Pension Board, it was agreed that Faith Church would make restitution of the correct and required contributions. Fortunately, the Church's reserve funds enabled us to absorb these unplanned expenses, as authorized by the Session, and we were able to meet the fundamental objective of ensuring that our pastor was "made whole" in terms of the pension contributions. Steps have been taken to ensure that that future annual submissions of updated terms of call and salary data to the Pension Board are double checked for accuracy.

Another issue requiring administrative attention relates to changes in the 2025 Benefits Plan announced by the Board of Pensions. Whereas installed pastors were previously required to be provided family medical coverage, under the new benefits provisions, congregations now *must* provide members-only coverage, at a dues contribution that is lower than under previous

benefits plans. For 2025 and beyond, family coverage *may* be provided, but at substantially higher rates.

An ad hoc task force was constituted with the HR and Finance Chairs, Pastor Goodrich, and John Colmers, who has expertise in health care insurance. Together, we reviewed the financial implications of various arrangements and were able to reach a mutually agreeable solution wherein Faith Church will continue to provide health coverage to Pastor Goodrich and her children, and health care coverage for her spouse would be covered under the health insurance program offered by her husband's employer. A stipend will be provided the pastor by Faith Church to partially off-set a lost stipend for this year as a result of Dary shifting to his employer's insurance. Here again, our objective was to be fair to our Pastor, whose original terms of call included family health care coverage, but also to be realistic about financial constraints that make it unfeasible to absorb the significant increase in Pension dues obligations of providing family coverage. We are blessed to have the level of goodwill and spirit of cooperation between pastor and the Session that characterized the discussions leading to resolution of this issue.

As in previous years, the Committee on Human Resources oversaw the administration of annual performance reviews for our church staff. Input on the performance of the Pastor, Minister of Music, and Parish Administrator was solicited from Session members, Committee Chairs, and, additionally, in the case of the Minister of Music, choir members. The Committee reviewed and approved the use of the questionnaire used in previous cycles to gather comments evaluating the performance of each person as well as an instrument for self-assessment. Input from a dozen congregation members showed a high degree of consensus. Summaries of the reviews

were provided to the Session, and discussions were held with each staff member for the purpose of providing feedback and reviewing goals for the coming year.

At the recommendation of the Christian Education Committee, we were glad to welcome James Herber to the role of Nursery Attendant for the period September through May.

Finance Committee Report
Christopher Pope – Chair
January 22, 2025

Committee Members: Neil Nemser, Ron Sperling, John Colmers, Ed Bernard, Carl Herber, James Herber, Cat Goodrich

2024 was the third consecutive year in which Faith Presbyterian Church funded significant repairs and upgrades to our Property and Plant. In addition, Faith corrected an error in benefits contributions from prior years. This exacerbated a softer year than budgeted in General Giving and resulted in reporting a net operating revenue less operating expenses of \$(102) thousand for the year. This operating deficit is offset by grant income and unrealized gains in our investment account reducing the actual loss to \$(56 thousand).

	<u>2024 Budget</u>	<u>2024 Actual</u>
Total 4000 · General Giving	317,584	295,706
Total 4400 · Building Rental Income	111,245	117,828
<u>Total 4500 · Other Income</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Income	428,829	413,534
Total 5000 · General Mission	6,750	10,764
Total 5100 · Denominational Expenses	4,680	4,679
Total 5200 · MMA Expense	-	26,256
Total 5300 · Designated Social Missions	10,600	6,700
New Acct # - Social Justice Committee		2,100
Total 5350 · Social Missions MMA	-	10,082
Total 5400 · Christian Education	3,200	2,311
Total 5500 · Worship Expenses	8,750	10,712
Total 5600 · Congregation & Fellowship	7,400	3,140
Total 5700 · Personnel	258,657	287,175
Total 5800 · Administrative & Office	15,050	22,621
Total 5900 · Property & Plant	113,701	123,066
<u>6000 · Other Miscellaneous Expenses</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,653</u>
Total Expense	428,788	514,259
Net Ordinary Income	\$ 41	\$ (100,725)
<u>Non Operating Income & Expenses</u>		
Grants		\$ 17,830
Investment Gains		\$ 26,589
Other Expense		\$ (104)
Net Reported Surplus / (Deficit)		\$ (56,410)

This loss must be considered in context.

Below is a list of revenue and expense items that should be considered one-time in nature, including the completion of two improvement projects approved by Session in prior years.

Adjustments

Session Approved Sounds of Faith	\$ 14,380
Session Approved HVAC	\$ 12,200
Roof / Tower Repairs	\$ 11,876
Pension & Benefits True-Up	\$ 24,429
Upfront Loan Costs	\$ 4,500
<u>Prepaid Pledge</u>	<u>\$ 20,000</u>
<u>Sub Total</u>	<u>\$ 87,385</u>
Adjusted Shortfall	\$ (13,340)

Considering the adjustments reduces the operating deficit to \$13.3 thousand. This more accurately reflects the operating performance of Faith but does highlight challenges we face moving forward.

General Giving of \$295 thousand compared unfavorably to Budget of \$318 thousand. One significant pledge for 2025 was received in December 2023, prior to year end and therefore included in 2023 results. This also overstated our yield on pledges and resulted in an over aggressive budget for this category.

Rental income of \$118 thousand was favorable to budget of \$111 thousand reflecting the addition of IOSC as a tenant in June. This was an important win to offset the decrease in the rental income from Presbytery.

General operating expenses were well managed as has been the track record of the committees.

Faith spent more than \$35 thousand on mission activities and contributions, both direct and through Presbytery in 2022. This equals more than 8% of our income.

Our cash and investment position increased to \$579 thousand at year-end, compared to \$492 thousand at the end of 2023, however this was supported by proceeds of our loan from the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program ("PILIP") which replenished funds used to upgrade our HVAC system. Our Net Liquidity balance, cash and investments less loans, declined from \$492 thousand at 12/31/2023 to \$463 at 12/31/2024.

	12/31/2022	12/31/2023	12/31/2024
Cash & Investments	543,957	491,799	578,787
Loan Balance	-	-	(116,080)
Net Liquidity	543,957	491,799	462,707

The balance on the PILP loan at year end is \$116 thousand at an interest rate of 4.9%.

Our 2024 budget is created with input from each of the committee chairs, with review and adjustment by the Finance Committee and Reverend Goodrich.

Faith Presbyterian Church Summary

Budget

	<u>2024 Budget</u>	<u>2024 Actual</u>	<u>2025 Budget</u>
Total 4000 · General Giving	317,584	295,706	287,406
Total 4400 · Building Rental Income	111,245	117,828	130,131
<u>Total 4500 · Other Income</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>21,740</u>
Total Income	428,829	413,534	439,276
Total 5000 · General Mission	6,750	10,764	6,750
Total 5100 · Denominational Expenses	4,680	4,679	4,914
Total 5200 · MMA Expense	-	26,256	-
Total 5300 · Designated Social Missions	10,600	6,700	6,200
New Acct # - Social Justice Committee		2,100	2,500
Total 5350 · Social Missions MMA	-	10,082	-
Total 5400 · Christian Education	3,200	2,311	2,950
Total 5500 · Worship Expenses	8,750	10,712	8,200
Total 5600 · Congregation & Fellowship	7,400	3,140	7,200
Total 5700 · Personnel	258,657	287,175	265,770
Total 5800 · Administrative & Office	15,050	22,621	15,060
Total 5900 · Property & Plant	113,701	123,066	120,652
<u>6000 · Other Miscellaneous Expenses</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,653</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Expense	428,788	514,259	440,196
Net Ordinary Income	\$ 41	\$ (100,725)	\$ (920)

General Giving is budgeted based on actual pledges received through our Stewardship Campaign. This figure is then adjusted based on our history of gifts received in excess of annual pledges. General Giving is budgeted to decrease increase from 2024 Budget based on giving history through 2024. Rental income is projected to increase due to annual escalators in each lease along with the projected expansion of IOSC space under lease.

We are budgeting for total expenses to increase 3% from the 2024 budget. The budget includes a 3.0% salary adjustment for staff and Reverend Goodrich. Repair and maintenance expenses is budgeted at \$9 thousand, a decrease reflecting the capital improvements to HVAC which has been the key expense over the past several years.

Our net result is a budgeted effectively breakeven for 2025.

While we take comfort from our liquidity position and our budgeted operating surplus, on the heels of more than a decade of strong operating results, we understand that we will continue to face expense pressure. It is critical that we continue to work to grow our church family and attract new tenants with mission complimentary with our church values.

As always, a detailed report on 2024 and the 2025 budget is available upon request. Our goal continues to be to provide timely, accurate, transparent information regarding our financial position.

Pastor Terms of Call
To be voted on by the Congregation Annually

Pastor's Terms of Call

Pastor's Call for 2025

Salary - \$59,225

Housing - \$38,625

Benefits not included in salary:

Professional Development - \$3,000

Minister Travel & Mileage - \$1,000

Health Insurance Transition Stipend - \$2,638

Health Insurance, Pension, & SECA Allowance

Four weeks' vacation/Two weeks study leave

Faith Presbyterian Church strives to be an open and fully diverse community seeking God, standing together, and serving our neighbors. We envision a world in which God's promises are made real here and now and all people:

- Live in peace
- Care for creation
- Are healed of brokenness
- Are treated equitably and fairly &
- Are invited in to become part of the Beloved Community

Faith Presbyterian Church
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